

State Advisory Committee for Children with Disabilities
NH Department Of Education
May 7, 2014
Room 15
4:30-7:00pm
Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Bonnie Dunham, Janet Reed, Kestrel Cole- McCrea, Candace Cole-McCrea, Joan Holleran, Audrey Burke, McKenzie Burke, Catherine Meister, Lynn Clough, Heidi Cloutier, Carol Conforti- Adams, Jean Parsons.

Guests: Sarah – Concord Monitor Reporter, Santina Thibedeau, Administrator of Bureau of Special Education, Ruth Littlefield, Bureau Consultant, Bridget Brown, Bureau Consultant, Tom Grinley-Parent.

Agenda Item I: Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Minutes, Public Comment, SAC Membership

- Bonnie Dunham welcomed members and guests.
- Candace Cole-McCrea made the motion to accept the April minutes and Kestrel Cole-McCrea seconded the minutes with the grammatical changes. All in favor, with two abstentions.
- There are vacancies for SAC membership representing individuals working with homeschooled students and the state juvenile system.
- Public Comment ~ Sarah – a concord monitor reporter, commented that she was interested in writing stories on what it is like for families with learning disabilities.
- Nomination for SAC membership ~ Audrey Burke nominated McKenzie Burke for SAC membership. McKenzie attends RSEC Academy (Regional Services and Education Center) in Amherst, NH. She is part of a leadership team at RSEC. Janet Reed seconded the nomination. All in favor.
- Additional nomination for SAC membership. Gary Carpenter, parent of two children with IEPs (one who is homeschooled), works for Phoenix House. He is a CRC counselor working with addiction, veterans PTSD, and mental health. Candice Cole McCrea made a motion to nominate Gary for SAC Membership. Carol Conforti-Adams seconded the motion. Gary will represent homeschooling of students. All in favor, no abstentions.
- Heidi Cloutier announced a conference coming up on; *School Culture, Climate and Positive Behavior Support* on August 20-21st at SERESC. She provided a flyer for members.
- There is also a RENEW implementation training offered from UNH by a tier intervention specialist.

Agenda Item II: Legislative Update, Update from SAC Liaisons

- The Legislative update was reviewed – Two bills that were highlighted; **SB 414** relative to Medicaid-funded services provided as part of a child's special education program and **SB 396** relative to child restraint practices ~ both have an ought to pass status.
- Santina commented that the Bureau of Special Education will be entering into rulemaking soon.

Agenda Item III: Old Business:

- Subcommittee recommendations; Bonnie will be asking Dick Cohen and Sue Marcotte-Jenkins to draft letters of recommendation for each of the committees that they belong to.
 - Janet Reed began conversation on the new safety transportation law requiring school vans to have same regulation codes as busses. This new law went into effect on October 1st. The cost affects the private provider. A meeting is being planned on May 23rd of private providers, Department of Education, Department of Safety, with an Attorney to address the issues. Clarification is needed around special education catastrophic aid and special transportation. SAC does not currently have a position on this. It is discrimination to endorse schools for special education and schools not to endorse for special education. It increases taxes for taxpayers for reimbursement. There is also a new point that parents cannot transport if they are receiving reimbursement. Emergencies are exempt and are allowed.
 - Carol Conforti-Adams motioned to stay involved and be apprised of updates etc. with new transportation laws and issues. Jean Parsons seconded the motion. A recommendation was written below to advise the Department. All in favor, with no opposition and no abstentions.
- ❖ To advise the Department of Education (DOE) that the SAC opposes the changes in Transportation requirements imposed by RSA 259:96A Administrative Rule 1302.7 and ask the DOE to share our concerns and our position. These are discriminatory towards students with disabilities, requiring additional rules for students with disabilities that are not required for typical students in private schools, and substantially limit opportunities for students with disabilities and impose an unanticipated extra cost to private providers of special education which must be funded by the taxpayers of the school districts who tuition students with special needs to private special education programs.

All in favor. No opposition and abstention.

Agenda Item IV: Update from the Bureau of Special Education ~ Santina Thibedeau

- Ruth Littlefield, from the Bureau, presented to the council on the State Performance Plan (SPP). The SPP is comprised of performance indicators and is due February 2015. Some of the indicators have mandatory compliance targets (such as 100% timely initial evaluations) and some require targets to be set. When a target has been established for all children/youth in NH, the target for children with disabilities will be the same target. The bureau will seek stakeholder input for indicators that require targets to be established once baseline data are determined. There is a new indicator in the SPP known as Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). This will be an ambitious yet achievable plan within the plan. The bureau has conducted a preliminary data and infrastructure analysis and, based on research, current initiatives, and gaps identified through statewide input, has identified preschool special education as the area of focus. The bureau will be looking for additional input as the data are further mined to determine desired outcomes and the theory of action to achieve the outcomes. There was a discussion with the group about the settings where preschool children

with disabilities receive services (public vs. community based and self-contained vs. regular early childhood). It was noted that it is important that the program be a quality program and that in order for preschool children to engage in a quality environment, they need to receive the appropriate supports and services. Candace Cole-McCrea requested that Ruth be invited to join the SAC retreat to share more information on the SPP/SSIP.

Agenda Item V: New Business, Emerging Issues, Announcements, Current Events, Public Comment.

- Catherine Meister announced that May is national foster care month.
- No further public comment.

Agenda Item VI: Adjournment

- Janet Reed made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Catherine Meister seconded the motion.